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U.S. DISTRICT COURT, E.D.N.Y.

★ MAY 15 2006 ★

BROOKLYN OFFICE

**VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT**

Re: *United States v. Stephen CARACAPPA, et al*  
*Criminal Docket No: CR-05-0192*

*Sentencing*  
*F2 D*  
*W 5/11/06*

Name: (Rachel) Leah Grunwald Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Optional)

This form may be used as a guide - you may submit a letter instead of filling out this form if you wish.

*If you need more space to answer any of the following questions, please feel free to use as much paper as you need, and simply attach these sheets of paper to this impact statement. Thank you.)*

1. How has this crime affected you and those close to you? Please feel free to discuss your feelings about what has happened and how it has affected your general well-being. Has this crime affected your relationship with any family members, friends, co-workers, and other people? As a result of this crime, if you or others close to you have sought any type of victim services, such as counseling by either a licensed professional, member of the clergy, or a community-sponsored support group, you may wish to mention this.

I have inclosed a printed statement.

1. from me Leah Grunwald. (wife of Israel Grunwald)
2. from Michael Weinstein our daughter.
3. from Yael Perlman our youngest daughter.

2. What physical injuries or symptoms have you or others close to you suffered as a result of this crime? You may want to write about how long the injuries lasted, or how long they are expected to last, and if you sought medical treatment for these injuries. You may also want to discuss what changes you have made in your life as a result of these injuries.
3. Has this crime affected your ability to perform your work, make a living, run a household, go to school or enjoy any other activities you previously performed or enjoyed? If so, please explain how these activities have been affected by this crime.
4. Are you an elderly victim, or have you suffered the loss of your retirement savings or home as a result of this crime? If you have suffered significant financial loss, what effect has this had on you, your lifestyle, your health, your family, etc.?

Loss of all my money

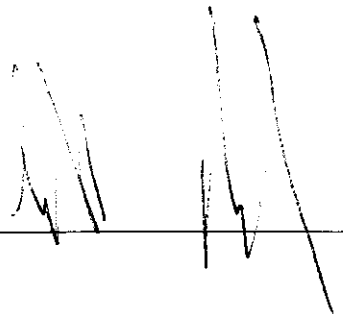
5. Have you been assessed any additional taxes, penalties or interest by the federal government as a result of this case?

Yes 2 no \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain:

DATE: 5 / 3 / 06

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. H.', written over a horizontal line.

**Leah Greenwald**  
**Wednesday, May 03, 2006**

**Victim Impact Statement.**

My husband Israel Greenwald was a wonderful husband and father to my two daughters. He loved us, supported us, and was always there for us. I was a young mother who worked only 4 hours a day as a school teacher. I loved to spend lots of time with my two little girls. I read to them, sang with them and played with them every day for hours. I had all the time in the world to teach them how to read and do math and draw. They were bright and eager kids who loved life and always laughed. Every time my daughters had a birthday, I would make the most amazing birthday parties for them with all our friends and relatives. There were magicians and plays that I wrote and acted out for the children. We traveled every summer to Israel and went away to hotels for Passover. We lived in a beautiful house on a quiet block surrounded by good friends and neighbors. Our lives were great with everything that we needed, and most importantly we were a happy family.

It is hard for me to describe the horror that I felt when my husband Israel disappeared. The helplessness, pain, terror and confusion that I went through is something I will never forget. Our life as a family took a 360 degree turn. At first I wasn't even able to work. I had to leave my job as a teacher. My husband's disappearance happened at a time when I was just awarded "The Excellent Teachers Award", a very prestigious award in education, which made my husband very proud. Now I was so stressed that I couldn't teach any more. Even if I wanted to teach, my income was so low, that it would not even pay 20% of our bills.

I was forced to take a mortgage against our home, just to survive. I felt as if no one was really helping us find out what happened to Israel. I was told by the FBI that there was no reason to believe that any foul play occurred, although I knew that Israel would never abandon his family out of his free will. As time went by I had to work very hard and for very many hours to try and keep up with all the bills that kept creeping up on us. I could never make enough money to pay for the school tuition, food, clothing, mortgage, electricity etc.

Every night when I went to sleep I felt very scared, and had a heavy feeling of sadness and helplessness. My husband was missing, most certainly dead, and we didn't even have a death certificate. I couldn't collect widow benefits or life insurance. My relatives couldn't help us financially because they didn't have any extra money. I was left to fend for myself and my family. The life we had was long gone. I still loved my daughters but could not spend time with them. In addition, during the first few years after his disappearance, even when we were together I wasn't myself. I was stressed and worried. Although we didn't have money for counseling I mustered up a few dollars for family counseling only to be told that we were a "three legged table" with one leg missing. It didn't help much. There were times when we sat in the dark when we couldn't pay for our electricity. We ate bread and butter when we had no money for food. We were cold when we did not have any heat. We were forced to take charity from certain organizations in our community which was humiliating since in the past my husband supported these same charities. I kept on trying so hard to keep my home, and keep my children in the same environment that they grew up in so as not to traumatize them any more.

I couldn't do it and within a few years we lost our home as well. We moved to Brooklyn, and we kept on moving, from place to place. Sometimes we moved because it was hard to keep up with the rent, and sometimes because the owner needed the apartment back. I got up early in the morning and worked until late at night in sales, and anything I could find, only to not even be close to covering our bills.

My daughters lost a father at a very fragile age, and they lost a mother too. They came home from school and I wasn't there for them. I had no time to play with them or even help them with their school work. Their grades declined dramatically. They went from being smart straight-A

students to barely passing. Eventually the schools mercilessly kicked them out because we just could not pay. I wanted to spend more time with my daughters, but I had to pay the bills.

The girls did not always understand why they didn't have everything that they needed or wanted. They were young and they wanted birthday parties, clothing, and more time with me. My oldest daughter Michal was very angry at me and she blamed me for everything that went wrong in our lives. She went through so much and couldn't even begin to understand why I couldn't give her everything that she needed. She took to working various jobs in order to pay for some of her necessities. I was heartbroken that I couldn't give them what they needed.

My daughters kept on asking me about their ABBA (Father) and why I am not doing enough to find him. The years went by with pain, struggle and great loss. Around twelve years after Israel disappeared, I finally left the company that I worked very hard for, and I had a little break between jobs for the first time. One day I stopped and looked at my beautiful daughters who were now young adults, and I didn't even see them grow. I was so busy trying to just survive.

My daughters lost their childhood, and I lost out on being a good mom. When my daughters got engaged to wonderful young men, I was very happy, yet very worried about finances again. I had to beg and borrow money to be able to pay for some of the expenses, and even then it did not even begin to cover what was needed to pay for a wedding and dress.

Has this crime affected my ability to perform my work, make a living, run a household, go to school, or enjoy any other activities. Yes, Yes, Yes, for all of the above. I started getting lots of anxiety attacks. I used to go to work feeling so much stress with my head spinning and my heart racing that I sometimes felt like life was ending. I kept on going for the sake of my kids. My kids who suffered beyond any description or words. I couldn't date and move on. I was to psychologically damaged for a relationship. I buried myself in work and used the excuse that I had to survive and pay bills.

Who suffered : Everyone from Israel's parents, who died of a broken heart shortly after his disappearance to my parents and siblings who had to stand by and watch us suffer without any means to help us.

But no one felt the pain like we did. This murder affected my relationship with family members, friends and co-workers. Not only because I wasn't myself for so long due to the stress, I also didn't have any time to spend with all my old friends. I neglected many of my good friends, and most of them didn't go out of their way to keep in touch with me. We were not a real family anymore, and so my friends faded away. The hardest times were always during the holidays, and on the Jewish Shabbat, when we had to sit at the table, alone, without Israel.

We didn't know where he was for over 19 years. We had no Grave to visit, and cry to. We lived in a fog. The pain is still very strong, but now we that he is finally resting in peace in the land of Israel I pray and hope that we as a family will be able to start to heal. My hope is that all the people who were involved in this horrible crime pay for what they had done. No punishment is good enough and nothing will make up for what was lost, but they must pay for their crimes for they did not just kill one person, they killed a family.

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

**Name: Michal Greenwald Weinstein (Daughter of Israel Greenwald)**

Age:30

Losing a father at a young age is hard enough, but to lose a father in such a violent and mysterious way is nothing short of horrific. To have your sweet innocence and childhood torn away from you with the knowledge that your loving father, the man whom you thought the world of, was murdered and never coming home. And to be inhumanely deprived of what every person deserves, a grave to cry on, a place to visit, closure. I don't know which crime was more monstrous, the actual murder or the concealment of his body. In Judaism there are laws of mourning which include sitting Shiva. Shiva allows the family of the deceased to sit for seven days while friends visit and cry and laugh and share tales. We were deprived of this basic tradition that so wisely helps you move on psychologically. It was only 19 years later, after his body was found and finally put to rest, that we had our Shiva, 19 years too late for all the emotional damage caused. As a child, I never felt normal. While others were being raised by single parents for reasons such as divorce or death, I was unique in that I had no clear answer as to what happened to my father. There were times when I would pretend he died of cancer or a freak accident. I had to hide my story for fear of shocking the probing inquirer. You ask about how it affected relationships with family? I blamed it all on my mother, for who else was there to take the brunt of my anger and pain. Watching my Mother go off and struggle to pay the bills made me feel as if she too abandoned me. Not having the basic necessities that a child needs such as proper clothes, a clean home, a happy home, made me resent her. Although as an adult I can now understand somewhat the terror she went through having to suddenly support a family with no help, as a child I did not understand at all. It is a testament to the unhappiness of our home life when you look through old albums and notice not one picture taken of us from his murder until we were teens and old enough to take our own pictures. Not one happy family outing, not one random smiling shot. You can say that my father's murder destroyed my relationship with my own Mother during my most crucial growing stages. You ask about counseling. We should have had counseling, but who was going to pay for that? The community that abandoned us? The Social Security or life insurance that we could not collect without a body? My Mother was struggling to keep the electricity on and to hold onto our beautiful home. She lost that battle and at 16 I had to say good bye to the only thing I had left that linked to my Father. When we took our last walk out of our home I remember fearing that if my Father would somehow come back, how would he find us. This crime completely altered our lives and robbed my sister and I of a normal childhood and security. I still have nightmares today as an adult about my past and the events that took place then.

3. This murder affected our entire lives on all levels. Because my mother had to suddenly become the breadwinner and was working from early morning until late evening, my sister and I had to raise ourselves. This affected my grades in school, which took a nosedive and never recovered until college. This affected our livelihood which resulted

in our moving at least 4 times, the most traumatic leaving our hometown that we grew up in. This affected our dignity and self esteem as we went from being the donors to being the charity case. This affected our emotional and psychological well being as we cried for our father and ourselves but yet had no grave to turn too. I envied everyone who had a grave, a luxury, in my mind, that we lacked. I had to take loans to go to school and start working at a very young age to support myself. While this builds character, it was still incredibly difficult and would not have been like this if my father was alive. We had not one penny to pay for our own weddings and was at the mercy of charity for those events that should only bring joy. Every part of our lives, the good and the bad, was coupled with pain and hardship. My mother never recovered, never remarried and because of that we had to bare her incredible pain as well.

I always wonder about what my life would have been like if he was allowed to live. I fantasize about what it would be like to have a Dad hold you and tell you that he will always protect and care for you. I imagined him proudly watching me graduate from college with honors, a great feat for someone who failed out of high school. I dreamt of him walking me down the aisle, proud of his little girl who was now starting her own family. And of course I think about what kind of grandfather he would have been like and how he would no doubt spoil my kids as he spoiled me with love, affection and lots of gifts.

This "crime" affected everything in our lives. From our nightmarish past to our present situation of not having him in our lives.

## Effect of Israel Greenwald's Death on His Daughter- Yael

How can I even begin to talk about and express to anyone what this vicious, selfish and cruel crime did to myself and my family? I have become so accustomed to withholding and denying my feelings, emotions and interpretation of experiences, even from myself, that it almost seems unfair to me to have to spit out on such short notice what should have been spoken about and processed throughout my lifetime. To have to limit in the concreteness of words what is unspeakable and incomprehensible is impossible to me.

The pain that we suffered did not have a place in the world, at least not one that we had access to. A death of a parent is always painful, tragic and heartbreaking. However, the way that it is usually brought about, ironically can serve as a source of comfort for the bereaved family. If a parent dies from an illness or an accident, the pain and sense of injustice is great, but the family can comfort themselves in some tiny measure by saying that it was their time to go and eventually they have closure. If a parent is killed intentionally, that pain is beyond description, but eventually with a grave and place of rest, the family can maintain their connection to their loved one and receive comfort in that way. When a parent just disappears off the face of the Earth, with no trace of where they are, when the family is left with no concrete knowledge about what happened to their loved one, just unanswered questions with no prospects of future answers, no body, no grave- that pain is beyond description.

I was existing in a living nightmare. A part of myself was stolen with no explanation, just swiped in one fell swoop and no one was held responsible. I had no consolation, nowhere to find comfort. My grief had no end. To compound the torture, rather than receiving the support that grieving families are entitled to and is such a crucial part of the "healing" process, I was treated as a pariah. The people and community that I took for granted as part of your life virtually disappeared as well. They were dumbfounded and confused. I could not comfort myself even with others who have lost parents for this pain is unique and no one can relate to it. My soul's scream was met with a resounding silence. My soul was begging for the wound to be healed, for the problem to go away, for everything to go back to normal, yet the reality didn't change. That is the pain that we were forced to experience.

Imagine being seven. Imagine being in a sheltered world where God is in control and people are trustworthy. Imagine being told that your father is kidnapped, but will soon be found. Imagine the fear of just that.

Imagine the fragile and pure hopes that a seven year old girl would invest in her father being found. Imagine the complete obsession of a child with wanting her father to be found. Imagine the burning question that deserves an answer, which no adult can answer, "Where is my father?" Imagine a seven year old child praying privately and desperately every night for two years that her father will be OK. Imagine the hushed whispers of children when the girl passes them that are just loud enough for her to hear. Just loud enough for her to feel isolated, alienated and know that she is different, that she is marked, that she is a "nebach" –yiddish word for a charity case. Imagine the contrast between the whimsical, light lives of typical seven year olds with the hell of this girl.

Imagine the desire to be “normal” like the other kids. Imagine the pain of abandonment that is not allowed to be felt as avoidance becomes the response of choice by all. It was like being told, “We cut off your arm, but don’t worry, just go on with your life starting now!” I carry the effects of this trauma always.

In a short time we went from being a loving, happy, generous Orthodox Jewish family to losing our father, possessions and with that, all stability. Our father was a true loss to everyone, he was extremely generous and charitable to family, friends and neighbors. He was a good and kind father to us and a good provider. All of that was forgotten, as we became viewed as the charity cases and we knew it. Rather than spending our childhood in the hard enough business of growing up, we spent our “childhood” in the impossible business of *covering up*. We were not allowed to live normally, we were guinea pigs in a glass cage struggling to compensate for our “defect”. I was not able to mourn, grieve or process my loss, I couldn’t feel entitled to grieve, I felt watched and blamed. I was a child and yet I had no joy of childhood. I was not able to develop normal human feelings, to be in touch with myself. My entire functioning centered around being careful to maintain an image of “normalcy”, a concept that eluded my chaotic and damaged inner world.

With the loss of our father came the loss of our mother too. Without the death benefits that we were entitled to, our mother had to struggle to support us. We grew up as “latchkey” children. Coming home to a lonely, cold home that had no light in it, both figuratively and literally. We suffered the loss of dignity as there were many times when we had no electricity, telephone connections or food in the fridge due to financial struggles, although my mother worked long hours. We were robbed of all things necessary to produce a healthy human being: a loving family, basic needs, an innocent, happy and normal childhood.

There was no one to help us to deal with and interpret our experience. There were no tools to help us accept and adjust. Therapy was a luxury which we could not afford. There was no one to talk to as this nightmare traumatized and imprisoned the only adult left, our mother. She could not be present physically or emotionally as she was in survival mode.

My family was a mess. We each were affected differently, we were not united. We were three islands colliding with each other and blaming each other, directing our frustration, anger and hatred at each other as we had no other place to direct it at. Love and support were replaced with hatred, bitterness and anger. Therefore, rather than experiencing and healing from our trauma, we carried it with us, it was and is our burden.

By being thrown into this cruel reality, where “grownups” stole my father from me, where the world is not safe, where abandonment is experienced during the years that security is crucial, I was robbed of not only my father, my mother, my sister, but my childhood. How can you replace that? You can’t. For the rest of my life, I will be struggling with the effects of this trauma, the feelings of deprivation and victimization that were imbued in me from such a young age. Daily life is overwhelming to me as my “back” is hurting and weakened from so many years of carrying this burden.

Even worse, I was robbed of something that should be a given for all people: my human dignity and trust of people. Everything was colored through my destroyed self and world image. Besides not being able to afford therapy, it may have not been effective as I

could not trust another adult for fear of betrayal and of judgement. I withdrew from the world, from myself.

I was left to live in my own thoughts and feelings with no objective compass to guide me. When I reached adolescence, I was full of anger, resentment and lack of motivation, school no longer mattered. I went from being an A student to switching high schools three times.

Emotionally, I grew up full of panic, paranoia, anxiety, fear, anger and sadness. To this day, I jump when my husband walks through the door or I hear a loud noise. I worry constantly about the safety and health of myself and my family. I am afraid of being abandoned, like I was as a child.

What other people consider a given, we couldn't: a grave to cry on, support from others. At every point in our lives that should be joyous, we felt the sharp pain of our unusual tragedy and loss. Rather than approaching our celebrations with simple happiness, it was always tinged with the emptiness of doing it without my father's participation. I was denied having a father to be proud of me at my Bat Mitzvah, my wedding, my children's births, my college graduation. He would have wanted to be there and for us not to have to be concerned with how we could pull it off financially.

This crime robbed us of our parents, our family life, our social life, our communal life, our material life, our emotional and psychological stability and health, our childhoods and therefore our adulthoods as well. Nothing in the world can give that back and that is the reality that was created by this greedy, selfish, cruel, heartless crime.